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SCIENTIFIC SESSION DEDICATED TO THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF V. I.  
LENIN'S BOOK MATERIALISM AND EMPIRIO-CRITICISM

---USSR---

by G. A. Yugay

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SCIENTIFIC SESSION DEDICATED TO THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF V. I.  
LENIN'S BOOK MATERIALISM AND EMPIRIO-CRITICISM  
--USSR--

Following is a translation of an article by G. A. Yugay, candidate in philosophical sciences, in the Russian-language periodical Vestnik Akademii nauk Kazakhskoy SSR /Journal of the Academy of Sciences Kazakh SSR/, Alma-Ata, Vol. 15, No. 6 (171), June 1959, pages 96-98.

On 12 May at the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh SSR a scientific session was held by the Institutes of Philosophy and Law, Botany, Physiology, and Nuclear Physics. It was devoted to the 50th anniversary of the publication of the outstanding work of V. I. Lenin, Materializm i empiriokrititsizm /Materialism and Empirio-Criticism/. The session attracted a great deal of attention among the scientific circles of the city of Alma-Ata.

The session opened with a short address by S. B. Baishev, Vice President of the Academy of Sciences Kazakh SSR, who emphasized that in his ingenious work Materializm i empiriokrititsizm, V. I. Lenin had creatively developed the basic questions of Marxist philosophy, had made on the basis of dialectical materialism a broad philosophical analysis of the most important achievements of the natural sciences, and had illumined the path of their further development. The philosophical ideas of V. I. Lenin have just as much significance and active force for our time as they had fifty years ago.

Candidate in philosophical sciences N. A. Musabayev delivered the report "V. I. Lenin's Book Materializm i empiriokrititsizm as a Mighty Contribution to the Development of Marxist Philosophy." Having described briefly the historical setting of this work, the speaker discussed the major principles of the book and their importance in the development of Marxist philosophy.

The merit of V. I. Lenin's work consists in the fact that in the struggle against different varieties of idealism he defended, developed, and enriched Marxist philosophy, gave a profound materialist interpretation of the basic question of philosophy -- concerning the relation of consciousness to being, the theory of knowledge. V. I. Lenin also gave rich new content to the philosophical bases of the natural sciences. Profoundly analyzing the causes which gave rise to "physical idealism," which had led the natural sciences into a blind alley, V. I. Lenin showed the means of escape from the crisis of physics. N. A. Musabayev discussed in detail the significance of Lenin's work for modern natural sciences.

V. I. Lenin dealt a resounding blow to the hypocritical bourgeois idea of "nonpartisanship" in philosophy. Materializm i empiriokrititsizm by V. I. Lenin is a clear example of a critique of idealistic philosophy.

Zh. S. Takibayev, academician of the AN Academy of Sciences Kazakh SSR, delivered a report on the present state of the physics of elementary particles in the light of V. I. Lenin's book Materializm i empiriokrititsizm. The modern development of the physics of elementary particles, said the speaker, is a clear confirmation of Lenin's ideas concerning the inexhaustibility of matter. While at the time of publication of V. I. Lenin's book only the elementary particles, the electron and proton, were known, at the present time their number has sharply increased. Discovered have been the neutron, positron, mezon, neutrino, photon, hyperon, heavy mezon. In 1955 and 1956 the anti-proton, anti-neutron, and anti-particle were discovered.

The speaker also discussed the properties of continuity of matter, expressed in the idea of a physical field: electromagnetic, mezon, nucleonic, electronic, gravitational. The conclusion of the address was devoted to the prospects for development of the physics of elementary particles in the light of the book Materializm i empiriokrititsizm.

In his report "The Significance of the Doctrine of V. I. Lenin Concerning Objective Truth for the Biological Sciences," L. K. Klyshev, corresponding member of the AN Kazakh SSR, showed with numerous facts from the theory of evolution of the organic world, plant physiology, and, in particular, the development of ideas on photosynthesis and the movement of plants, that the development of biology entirely confirms the doctrine of V. I. Lenin concerning objective, relative, and absolute truth.

The speaker emphasized also the necessary for the conscious application of the methodology of Marxist philosophy by natural scientists.

Participants in the scientific session also heard a report by T. D. Dzhumagazin, candidate in philosophical sciences, on "The Significance of V. I. Lenin's book Materializm i empiriokrititsizm in the Struggle Against Contemporary Philosophical Revisionism."

Now, said T. D. Dzhumagazin, as fifty years ago, bourgeois philosophers are exerting all their efforts to show the "obsolescence" of the opposition between materialism and idealism. And modern revisionists join in the chorus, persuaded as if the "traditional division" of all philosophical directions into two camps: materialism and idealism, has become obsolete. Thus, the French revisionist Lefevre asserts that the opposition of materialism to idealism has already outlived itself because materialism and idealism are increasingly displaying a tendency towards merging, as he expressed it, towards sclerosis.

Concealment of the opposition in principle between materialism and idealism, continued the speaker, rejection of the principle of partisanship in philosophy, are essentially an attempt to cover the moving over of the revisionists from a materialist to an idealist position, an attempt to smuggle reactionary idealist principles into Marxist ideology.

Substituting sophistry for the dialectic, the revisionists slur over the objective oppositions of capitalist society and attempt to present it as a society without crises.

The misunderstanding and perversion by the revisionists of Marxist doctrine concerning the unity of theory and practice result in their ignoring Marxist philosophy as the theoretical foundation for the building of Communism.

In conclusion, the speaker noted the continuing role of the basic ideas set forth by V. I. Lenin in Materializm i empiriokrititsizm in the struggle against revisions of Marxism and particularly in the struggle against contemporary revisionism, which is the chief menace to the modern workers' movement.

After the reports, speeches were made by scientific personnel of various specialties.

G. A. Yugay, candidate in philosophical sciences, devoted his remarks to the methodological significance of Lenin's doctrine concerning the universal property of matter. The reflection of matter has its own specific forms. Along with sensation and thought, which are conditioned by the phenomenon of the nerve apparatus and the nerve-brain system, there are also lower forms of expression identical with but not allied to sensations. In Materializm i empiriokrititsizm V. I. Lenin wrote: "It is logical to suppose that all matter possesses a property essentially allied with sensation, the property of reflection." G. A. Yugay discussed the problem of irritability of plants as one of the forms of reflection of matter, and its significance for the further development of plant physiology.

The address of V. S. Sverchkova, scientific associate of the Institute of Physiology of the AN Kazakh SSR and candidate in medical sciences, was devoted to V. I. Lenin's critique of "physiological" idealism. The father of "physiological" idealism was the German philosopher I. Mueller, who, maintaining that one and the same external cause called forth different sensations in different sense organs, "was inclined on this basis to deny that our sensations are forms of objective reality" (V. I. Lenin, Soch. Works, Vol. 14, p. 290). Closely connected with the "physiological" idealism of I. Mueller was the idealistic theory of symbols developed by a follower of I. Mueller, G. Helmholtz, and modern "physiological" idealism.

The physiological heritage of I. M. Sechenov and I. P. Pavlov is the foundation in natural science for the scientific criticism and overcoming of "physiological" idealism.

Zh. Abdil'din, candidate in philosophical sciences, spoke concerning the significance for quantum physics of V. I. Lenin's Materializm i empiriokrititsizm. The profound development by V. I. Lenin of the categories of causation, of law, constitutes a theoretical weapon in the struggle with indeterminism in quantum physics. The dialectical-materialist comprehension of the nature of statistical and dynamic laws in quantum physics is directly connected with Lenin's criticism of the mechanistic comprehension of causality and a defense of the dialectical comprehension of causality.

A. Kasymzhanov, scientific associate of the Institute of Philosophy and Law, spoke on the characteristic features of contemporary bourgeois idealistic philosophy and on the Leninist principle of criticism of idealism. The gnosiological roots of "physical idealism" discovered by V. I. Lenin are fully applicable also to the analysis of contemporary idealism. The contemporary formalistic "theories" of the construction of axiomatic logic, apriorism, subjectivism in the treatment of the nature of cognition are connected with the further development of mathematics and with the introduction of its methods into the most diverse branches of knowledge. Relativism is also one of the basic gnosiological roots of contemporary idealism.

In his address Ya. I. Granovskiy, scientific associate of the Institute of Nuclear Physics of the AN Kazakh SSR, noted that V. I. Lenin's position concerning the inexhaustibility of the properties of the electron in modern physics applies to all elementary particles, and that this has important methodological significance for the development of physics. Ya. I. Granovskiy stated that one of the attempts to explain theoretically the properties of elementary particles is the nonlinear theory of elementary particles, in which is combined the electromagnetic theory of Maxwell, Dirac's theory of the electron, and the mezon theory. It may be conjectured that in the near future it will be possible to discover on the basis of the development of this unified theory the laws of nuclear forces.

T. I. Pavlova, scientific associate of the Central Scientific Library of the AN Kazakh SSR, presented interesting data to the participants in the scientific session concerning the dissemination of V. I. Lenin's book Materializm i empiriokrititsizm. In our country, from 1917 to 1958, V. I. Lenin's book was republished 103 times in 23 languages with a total for all editions of 5,034,000 copies.

It has also been published in large editions in the countries of the socialist camp in the languages of the peoples of those countries, and has also repeatedly been published in the capitalist countries.

V. I. Lenin's Materializm i empiriokrititsizm was published in the Kazakh language in 1941 in an edition of 7,000 copies. The volume of the fourth edition of V. I. Lenin's collected works containing Materializm i empiriokrititsizm was published in 1951 in a Kazakh translation in an edition of 25,000 copies.